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8 March 1963

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

State Department review
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*Syria: Military elements, believed to be Baathist-inspired, seized power in Syria early on 8 March.

The coup, which followed the Baathist blow against Qasim in Iraq by exactly one month to the day, has received the support of all major army elements.

The new Syrian regime is broadcasting a Baathist propaganda line emphasizing Syria's unity with Iraq, the UAR, and Algeria--and its opposition to Communism.

The Iraqi Baathist regime immediately broadcast its full support for the Syrian coup, put the Iraqi armed forces on full alert status, and ordered units to the Syrian border. Cairo Radio, apparently caught unaware, quickly followed up with its declaration of solidarity with the new Syrian regime. [REDACTED]

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Cuba-USSR: A preliminary scan of the high-altitude photography [] reveals some activity, possibly related to the movement of Soviet troops, at two of the Soviet military camps in Cuba.

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At the Remedios camp, unidentified material was observed alongside three barracks []. These were not the same barracks where unidentified material was observed []. Several cargo trucks were parked near the barracks.

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At the Holguin complex, two probable radars, one large tent, and one small tent were not visible at the apparent communications site north of the encampment where they had been observed []. Photography [] although not clear, indicates that some of these objects were being moved.

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Some other types of Soviet units previously have shifted locations within Cuba. The activity at Remedios and Holguin has not developed to an extent which would indicate whether this is a local move or a withdrawal.

Other recent photography shows that a few tents have been removed from scattered locations at both Remedios and Holguin. []

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Cuba:

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[A major Cuban ground forces concentration is located in Managua, and a new SAM site has been under construction about two miles northeast of there since January. While no missile or guidance equipment is yet in place, the revetments and road facilities of this site are more extensive and of a more permanent nature than many of the operational SAM sites in Cuba. It is possible that this facility is being developed as a training site for Cubans.]

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Indonesia-Philippines-Malaysia: Indonesia is pressing the Philippines for joint action in opposing the projected Federation of Malaysia.

Foreign Minister Subandrio is scheduled to arrive in Manila today to follow up talks held there in recent days by his deputy.

The Philippine Government so far has rejected Indonesia's proposal for joint action, holding that each country must oppose Malaysia in its own way. President Macapagal recently implied that Manila would not recognize Malaysia if it is pushed through as scheduled by this August. As an alternative, he is promoting the concept of a Malayan confederation embracing the Philippines and Indonesia in addition to the areas designated for Malaysia.

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Afghanistan: Prime Minister Daud has reportedly submitted his resignation in a dispute with the King, and a new government may be announced soon.

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There had already been considerable dissension within the royal family and high government circles in recent months over Afghanistan's increasing dependence on the USSR and over the economic consequences of closing the border to shipments crossing Pakistan.

Although rumors of the crisis are spreading in Kabul, the matter is still being handled privately within the confines of the royal family, which traditionally presents a unified front. Daud may still hope that the King will be unable to find a qualified successor and will return him to office in a stronger position than before.

If, on appointment of a successor, Daud were unwilling to retire gracefully, the division in the ranks of the royal family could have serious consequences for political stability in the country.

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Turkey: Premier Inonu's prestige continues to decline, and he may reshuffle his cabinet in an effort to strengthen his coalition government before the National Assembly reconvenes on 18 March.

The coalition is sharply divided over the government's slowness in releasing imprisoned members of the old Menderes regime. The opposition, for its part, has scored in drawing attention to the slow pace of economic growth. There has been speculation that President Gursel may replace Inonu with an independent prime minister backed by a coalition drawn from all parties.

President Bayar, who has been imprisoned since 1960, is seriously ill. His death could prompt new demonstrations against the regime. Some 20,000 people attended the funeral of Bayar's wife, who died last December.

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Congo: [The US Embassy in Leopoldville is pessimistic over the present situation in the Congo.]

[Ambassador Gullion feels that the end of Katanga's secession has not improved the political climate significantly, and he expects that new attempts will be made in the now reconvening Parliament to bring down Adoula.]

[He reports that Tshombé's possibly imminent return from Europe to Elisabethville may signal a dangerous period ahead, particularly in the light of the departure of a substantial number of UN troops and the high percentage of Katangan gendarmes who have not surrendered. The ambassador believes that Katangan leaders are feigning cooperation, but actually dragging their feet on integration. The new alliance between North and South Katangan leaders, he feels, will spell trouble for the central government.]

[Gullion is also concerned by Adoula's indecisiveness and tendency to let things drag. He believes that Adoula may soon bow to domestic and foreign pressures to release the leftist former Stanleyville leader, Antoine Gizenga, who has been in prison since January 1962.]

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East Africa - United Kingdom: Ethiopia has offered to provide military assistance to an independent Kenya for defense against Somali irredentist incursions.

An Ethiopian Foreign Ministry spokesman privately stated on 6 March that Ethiopian assistance would be available to Kenya to regain any Somali-inhabited Kenya territory surrendered to the Somali Republic by the UK. He said that such assistance would not be forthcoming as long as Kenya's affairs remain under UK control.

[Britain currently plans to grant regional autonomy to Somalis residing in eastern Kenya rather than give up any territory. London hopes this move will lessen enthusiasm among Somali Kenyans for secession and will discourage irresponsible action by Mogadiscio. London's recognition of special tribal interests in Kenya, however, is likely, in fact, to lead Somali tribesmen to believe that Britain will ultimately allow their union with the Somali Republic, as well as to stimulate demands for autonomy by other Kenya tribal groups.

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Belgium: [Spaak told Ambassador Merchant on 6 March that Belgium cannot take a favorable stand now on the proposed NATO multilateral nuclear force, but held out hope of later Belgian participation.]

[Spaak said that premature talks on the force might crystallize opposition to it now led by Defense Minister Segers and key members of the Senate. Conditions for a "favorable evolution of the situation," however, would include: British, German, and Italian commitments to the force; manageable costs; and prior reorganization and reorientation of the Belgian defense effort.]

[Spaak also said that if Belgium and other European countries were permitted to participate in the production of equipment for the multilateral force, and thus to gain access to modern technology in nuclear research and development, they would have strong inducement to join.]

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West Germany: [Bonn has indicated support of a NATO multilateral nuclear force, but with certain reservations.]

[Defense Minister von Hassel told Ambassador Merchant on 6 March that his government views the force as a means of enhancing the strength and unity of NATO. He agreed there should be rapid movement from the discussion to the implementation stage, and that unresolved questions should be left for later decision in technical discussions.]

[Von Hassel stated that he had been converted during his recent visit to Washington to the concept of mixed manning, which he now regards as "feasible and right."]

[He said Bonn believes nuclear submarines would be the best carrier for a NATO nuclear force, but indicated that surface ships might be acceptable in the initial stage. He said that Bonn favors the majority vote principle in a decision for use of the force.]

[Von Hassel implied that the "extraordinary difficult" West German budget situation would be a decisive factor in any West German commitment to build both conventional forces and a multilateral nuclear force.]

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